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VOL. IV.

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VOL. V.

65
66 Dominique
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96 Harp of Altenburg
97

VOL. VII.

98 Tact
99 Gustavus III.
100 Jessie of Dumblane [bles
101 Turning the Ta-
102 Old Gentleman
103 Blue Devils
104 Hush Money
105 Walter Brand
106 Frank Fox Phipps
107 Blacksmith
108 Rendezvous
109 Prisoner of Rochelle
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112 Mountain King
113 Red Crow

VOL. VIII.

114 Heiress of Bruges
115 Deserted Village
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117 German Jew
118 Seven Clerks
119 Irresistibles
120 First Night
121
122 Jacob Faithful
123
124 Day in Paris
125 Schoolfellows
126 Lestocq
127 Married Rake
128 Esther
129

VOL. IX.

130 Note Forger
131 Carimilhan [lock
132 Wenlock of Wen-
133 Lurline.
134 Beau Nash
135 Queen's Jewel
136 Capers & Coronets
137 Cupid in London
138 Catching an Heiress
139 Station House
140 Seven Sisters
141 Who'll Lend me a Wife?
142 Old Oak Tree
143 Covenanters
144 Hazard of the Die
145 Yellow Kids

VOL. X.

146 Hunting a Turtle
147 Spirit of the Rhine
148 King's Command
149
150 Carmelites
151 Bronze Horse
152 Chelsea Pensioners
153 Widow's Victim
154 Rinaldo Rinaldini
155 Old and Young Stager
156 Luke Somerton
157 Doves in a C'
158 Paul Clifford
159 Borrow'd Feat
160 Black Hugh
161 Lesson in Lo

VOL. XI.

162 Delusion
163 Marie
164 Is She a Wom
165 Painter of Gl
166
167

168 Come to Tow
169 Zazezizozu
170 Othello Trave
171 Man about T
172 John Stafford
173 P. L.
174 Farmer's Stor
175 Arnold of Win
176 Mrs. White [
177 Middy Ashor

VOL. XII.

178 Pacha's Brid
179 Perils of Pip
180 State Secrets
181 Gaberlunzie M
182 Matteo Falcon
183 Kate Kearney
184 Minerali
185 Tradesman's
186 John English
187 Lillian, the S
188 Mummy [
189 Ratlin the Re
190 Flight to Ame
191 Last Man
192 Roger de Cove
193 Violette

VOL. XIII.

194 Love is Blind
195 Mount St Ber
196 Douglas Trave
197 Paul Reproba
198 Maidens Bew
199 Rival Pages
200 Manfredi
201 False Colours
202 Pickwick Clu
203 Romeo Trave
204 Venus in Arm
205 Bachelors' B
tons
206 Wife Travesti
207 Cariine
208 Death Token
209 Cavalier

VOL. XIV.

210 Breakers A-h
211

The Middy Ashore.

TOM (Pulling off his bearskin) It's a lie my Lady!

LADY S. (starting up) The Boy's on!

TOM Scuttle me *(Runs off)*

THE MIDDY ASHORE.

A FARCE,

IN

One Act.

BY

BAYLE BERNARD,

AUTHOR OF THE FARMER'S STORY, THE MAN ABOUT TOWN,
THE PRACTICAL MAN, THE PASSING CLOUD,
ETC., ETC.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Harry Halcyon, the Middy Ashore	Mrs. Fitzwilliam
Lieutenant Morton H. M. S. Orion	Mr. Bannister
Tom Cringle, Bo'son of the "Billy Ruffin" ..	Mr. Salter
Limberback, a Legal Adviser	Mr. Romer
Mr. Tonnish	Mr. Oxberry
Stubbs, a Constable	Mr. Ireland
Lady Starchington	Miss Richardson
Emily, her Niece	Miss Shaw
Anne, her Maid	Mrs. F. Matthews

Scene—*A Marine Villa in Sussex.*

First produced at the English Opera House, May 23, 1836.
Time of Representation, 50 minutes.

COSTUME.

Morton—Blue body coat, metal buttons, blue trousers, white waistcoat.
Cringle—Pea jacket, blue trousers and waistcoat, glased hat.
Limberback—Broad tailed black coat, light waistcoat, nankeen breeches and gaiters.
Tonnish—Cream coloured pantaloons, dress waistcoat, blue dress coat.
Harry—Middy's jacket, light waistcoat, blue trousers, hat with cockade
Lady Starchington—Grey silk dress and turban.
Emily—White muslin frock.
Anne—Coloured muslin dress and cap.

THE MIDDY ASHORE.

SCENE I.—*Drawing Room in a Marine Villa elegantly furnished.*

Enter LADY STARCHINGTON, *and* LIMBERBACK, R. H. *with Papers.*

Lady S. You must perceive, Mr. Limberback, what obligations have been imposed upon me; my brother the Admiral, dying so suddenly at Naples, leaving Henry heir to this estate, and Emily a marriageable girl with a good fortune; it is my paramount duty to secure her happiness.

Lim. Undoubtedly my lady.

Lady S. To that end, I selected as her husband a man of rank and fashion—the Hon. Mr. Tonnish, but with a perverseness peculiar to her age, she has chosen to become attached to a wretched Lieutenant in the Navy, who has been hovering about here for the last month for the purpose of running off with her.

Lim. The want of principle in some men is perfectly astonishing

Lady S. Fortunately, however, I have hit upon the means of frustrating his intentions; on looking over my brothers papers I discovered an acknowledgement from this Lieutenant. (who it seems was under his command at Malta.) for the sum of thirty pounds, advanced to him on some occasion of distress. Now it has struck me, that in order to preclude any danger 'till my neice becomes the wife of Mr. Tonnish———

Lim. Your Ladyship would like me to remove the Lieutenant to another post?

Lady S. Precisely so—you will procure the writ then instantly?

Lim. To prove my alacrity my lady, I will postpone my visit to a sick mother, so ruling with me is the grand moral principle that to do great right——

Lady S. Yes, yes.

Lim. We should sometimes do a little wrong; good morning my lady. [*Exit* R. H.

Lady S. So that point's set at rest—this Lieutenant removed Emily can scarcely resist my efforts for her welfare, and yet this relieves me of but half my burthen. Henry, whom I expect home this morning from his ship, has modell'd himself I hear so completely on his father, that the gentle boy, who left me three years since, has been transformed into a boisterous sea wolf!

Enter TONNISH, *yawning* L. H.

Ton. Good news, Lady S, your nephew has arrived—a faithful picture of his element in motion.

Lady S. Ah Mr. Tonnish, you know not what uneasiness this circumstance has given me. I am told he has become so perfectly marine as to be totally unfit to mix in good society.

Ton. How *tiar*some !

Lady S. I need not tell you how fatal this must be to a young man of good family just entering on his estate ; might I then in this emergency beg you to consider the situation of your future brother in law,—to take him under your tuition.

Ton. With pleasure.

Lady S. And yet when I consider the trouble this will give you——

Ton. My dear Lady S. to teach him all I know, will be the easiest thing imaginable.

Har. (*Without* L. H.) " Fair weather—vil*l*a aboy."

Lady S. He is here.

Har. (*Singing.*) Here's the wind that blows, and the ship that goes, and the lass that loves a sailor. [*Runs in.*] Ah, my dear aunt !

Lady S. Henry !

Har, After three years absence, Lord your face is as welcome to me as the sky after a squall. [Tonnish *gets to* R. H.] Some change in me, eh ? something like a man now aunt ? but you are just the same—when I look at you I can't see a wrinkle—hem ! I mean a dimple that's altered. Well aunt, so poor father has cut his cable at last—you can't think how melancholy I have been with this black pennant on my starboard spar. [*Pointing to the crape on his arm.*]

Ton. Starboard spar !

Lady S. (*Aside to* Tonnish.) You see 'tis just as I feared.

Har. But 'its no use repining—every mess is numbered from the Captains to the Cook, and fathers birth above I'm sure must be a good one—so cheer up aunt, I have come on shore to make you happy.

Lady S Dear dutiful child, he's as plastic as wax, [*Aside.*] Henry, do you forget Mr. Tonnish ?

Har. Mr. Tonnish. [*Crossing to him and shaking his hand eagerly.*] Well, may I never get a ship, if I knew you. Ah, do you remember the life I and Emmy used to lead you in Berkshire ?—when we turned your dress pumps into a line of packets on the pond, ha, ha !

Lady S. Ha, ha, ha!

Ton. Ha, ha! how very tiarsome. [*Aside.*]

Har. But aunt where's Emmy ?

Lady S She'll be with us presently—but now dear child tell us how you have endured your trials—you must have been sadly annoyed by those vulgar people on board ship!

Har. Yes, aunt, the first day I was afloat—then a Middy gets as little favour as a swab.

Lady S. A what ?

Har. A swab !

Ton. A swab !

Har. But when I had learnt to swagger, set my scraper—[*Cocking his hat.*] and mount the main top—bless you they all looked up to me ; in a month the Bosen said I was the most popular young gentleman on board.

Lady S. Then they do call you young gentlemen ?

Har. Oh, yes, they call us all young gentlemen.

Lady S. Well that's a politeness I didn't give them credit for.

Har. In port you know I had plenty of amusement—Balls—Plays and Concerts; and at sea, what with yarns upon deck—games in the mess room—and a glass always in my hand.

Lady S. A glass always in your hand ?

Har. A telescope ; it was my turn sometimes to take the ships courses, and I was always very regular. I kept a log.

Lady S. A what ?

Har. A log—a journal.

Ton. Oh, then on board ship you call a book—a log ?

Har. Here it is. [*Taking it from his breast*) Now, I'll just read you aunt my mems of a day on shore. [*Reads.*] 10. A. M. rose rigg'd, and took an observation of the weather—weighed for the street—saw a' head the port Admiral's daughter, rated at sixteen—stood in chase—foot slipped and capsized in a kennel—home to refit—hoisted a new flying jib—[*Touching his frill.*] weighed for dinner—received at the Admirals with a general salute—came to anchor by the female craft—moored on the mother bank—baled out soup—shipped fish—exchanged shots with a sixty four—hauled off to the ladies—formed a line for a dance—crowded sail down the middle—stood on the wrong tack and went bump ashore—on an invalid's toes. I A. M. weighed for home—weathered the door—dowsed the glims—turned in [*Crosses to* L H.]

Lady S. (*To* Ton.) Did you ever hear such inexplicable jargon ?—was this your only amusement ?

Har. Not my only one—you know I have something of a pipe—and come what would, fair weather or foul, I could always keep myself in temper with a tune, nay—I could sing a second to the wildest wind that whistled—this made me th

ships favourite. When pay day approached I used to regale my Jacks aloft with—[*Sings.*]

Will you go to Cawsand Bay, Billy boy, Billy boy?
Will you go to Cawsand Bay, Billy boy?
Will you go to Cawsand Bay?
When your pocket's full of pay—
We'll jig it night and day, Billy boy?

For the martial spirits of the deck on the eve of an engagement I had the more inspiring strain [*Sings.*] "England expects that every man this day will do his duty." While to the poor lieutenants whose hearts had been raked by the black eyes of Portsmouth, who was so welcome on a summer nights watch with the old English lullaby of the ocean rover. [*Sings.*] "All in the downs the fleet was moor'd."

Lady S. (*To* Tom) The son of an Admiral piping himself into popularity; and pray my dear amidst this diversified groupe, who were your favourites?

Har. I had but one—

Lady S. The Captain?

Har. His superior in heart.

Lady S. And this person—

Har. I have brought with me.

Lady S. Where is he?

Har. Waiting for signals,

Lady S. My dear child, why didn't you ask him in?

Har (*Running to* L. H. *and calling through his hand*) Tom Cringle, ahoy.

Lady S. Now, I suppose we shall see a specimen of a nautical gentleman.

Enter TOM CRINGLE, *with a trunk under each arm, a hammock on his back—a spy glass and a speaking trumpet.*

Har. Dear aunt, a faithful servant of my fathers—a truer cocoa, for with a rough shell he has a very sound core. Now, Tom, shew your graces. [*Aside,*]

Tom. (*To* Harry) You'll clap a hand to the windlass mas te Harry, if I gets aground? My humble sarvis to you marm—my name's Mr. Tom Cringle, late Boson of his Majesty's ship the Billy Ruffin. I've been in the Admirals sarvis ever since I warn't no bigger than a pound of pigtail, and when worse luck, he come to be as old as your ladyship——

Lady S. Sir!

Har. Tom Tom, breakers, [*Aside to him.*]

Tom. Oho! helm down—I begs pardon my lady I means to say when he comed to lay up in ordinary—Tom said he to me, tho' I'm going to creep ashore like a crab, do you keep an eye on the son of your old friend. Admiral said I, wringing hi

noble fin for the last time, I'll stick to him like 'parseverance to a fine commander,'—soon after that he went down my lady, and when I seed master Harry piping his eye—I says to him come come, master Harry, if you gives in, who'll be left to comfort your poor old superannyvated aunt.

Lady S. Henry!

Har. (*Smothering a laugh.*) Tom.

Tom. Ashore agin—well, I axes pardon marm, I means no offence—I——[*Takes out his Tobacco box.*] does your ladyship do anything in this way?

Lady S. (*Turning from him with indignation.*) Fah!

Tom. What a Hippopotamus!

Lady S. Henry, you don't intend to retain the services of that sea calf?—

Har. Come come aunt—you know there's a difference between a forecastle and a drawing room, he's out of his element, water is *his* element.

Lady S. I should imagine *Brandy*!

Har. Where shall he take my trunks?

Lady S Anne! [Anne *entering* R. H.] Yes my lady—

Har. Anne, what the little curly headed friend I left behind me—I declare aunt if you were not by I should be tempted to exercise my marine privilege. [*Crosses to* R. C.]

Tom. Fire away, sir—my lady won't be nice, will you?

Lady S. Sir!—

Tom. (*Turning away.*) Well, I hates malice.

Lady S. Anne show that man the way to your master's dressing room—Is this all your luggage, Henry?

Tom. Yes marm, and this here hammock's mine—if it's all the same to you my lady I'll *swing*.

Lady S. I should rejoice to see you.

Anne. This way if you please Mr. Cringle.

Tom. Thank you my lass, [*Gathering up the trunks.*] Good morning my lady—gentility was always the wogue on board the Billy Ruffin. [*Exit with* Anne R. H.

Har. But aunt I hope we shall dine early.

Lady S. At six my love, I have invited a party of select friends to meet you.

Har. Well that's very kind of you, then I suppose I must go into dock.

Lady S. Dock?

Har. Mount another jib.

Lady S. Now my dear child, am I a member af the Billy Ruffian? can't you say I'll go up stairs and change.

Har. Indeed I can't, for my other coat has lost a tier of buttons.

Lady S. Here's a dilemma!

Tom. A coat without buttons!

Lady S. And friends so particular—

Tom. Let me reflect, I've a box of things up stairs, and among them now I remember, a coat of my younger brother, made for him when he yachted the Mediterranian in a delicate state of health.

Har. Well, now may I never know promotion if that ain't friendly—so now Mr Tonnish let's run up and rig, then I want to weigh for the village and find out all the old men and women who used to give me nuts and apples. [*Running to* R. H. *and shouting through hand.*] I say you Tom Cringle.

Tom. (*Outside.*) Aye aye, sir—

Har. "Stand by the main braces to let all go."

Tom. Aye aye, sir—

Har. Come along Mr. Tonnish. [*Drags him off* R. H.]

Lady S. Good heavens what a nuisance! why the boy is a thousand times worse than I expected—whilst that wretch is with him all hope of his improvement is absurd—I see my only course, he shall quit the house this very day—yes when I go to Henry my first words to him shall be—

Enter TOM CRINGLE R. H.

Tom. The wind's shifted to sou' west by sou,' my lady.

Lady S. Indeed sir, and pray what's the wind to me?

Tom. What's the wind to me, there's a speech for a lady.

Lady S. Have you any thing more to say?

Tom. Lord bless you marm, I've as many lives to pay out as would moor a fleet; I've got to tell you what I think of the build and rig of this here house.—

Lady S. You'll be good enough to reserve your criticisms for the ear they'll gratify—there's the door sir.

Tom. Oh then you'd like to hear my yarn in private—

Lady S In private! [*Crosses to* R.] hark you sir, that my nephew should have brought such a porpoise into a decent family is his fault, but if you presume on that account to annoy its members, I shall order the servants to restore you to your element, the *sea*, by a very summary process. [*Exit* R. H.

Tom. I suppose that's what she calls settling a stranger comfortably—well, well, poor soul if people always will live ashore what should they know of good manners.

Enter Anne R. H. *with a letter.*

Anne. I beg pardon Mr. Thomas Cringle, but is Mr. Henry here.

Tom. Oho—the tender wants to haul alongside, well my lass what's in the wind—you need not keep closed hatches with a "*Wally De Sham.*"

Anne Here's a letter for him from a gentleman that's waiting outside—I don't mind telling you Mr. Thomas Cringle, it's Miss Emily's sweetheart, and as he's forbid the house, this must go to Mr. Henry without my lady's knowing it.

Tom. What would the old gorgon be wery wext ?

Anne. Oh very.

Tom. Then I'm good natur'd. [*Takes it.*]

Anne. But it will be quite safe in your hands ?

Tom. Safe ! why I have had a whole ships company in my hands.

Anne. Deary me !

Tom. I say my lass, do you like anything what comes from the sea ?

Anne. Dearly !

Tom. Does you—come here's something civilized at last, and what sort of Jack do you like best.

Anne. One that weighs about four pounds.

Tom. What ?

Anne. But then I like to see him nicely dress d.

Tom. Oh !

Anne My way is to cut off his head and tail and fry him in oil.

Tom. Why shiver me, your'e a cannibal !

Anne. No I aint—I was born in Sussex.

Tom. Are you talking of a man ?

Anne. Lauks no, a fish—

Tom. A fish—ah all comes of living ashore Damn me if she could tell a Dolphin from a Donkey. [*Goes off with her* L. H.]

SCENE II.—*A Dressing Room. Opening through a French Window upon a balcony at back, overlooking Gardens.* HARRY *discovered in his shirt sleeves, a high satin stock about his throat.* TONNISH *sitting near him, reading.*

Har. So you think, Mr. Tonnish, thar my appearance is improved ?

Ton. Decidedly. I now should say you had all your life inhaled the atmosphe e of St. James's.

Har. (*Looking in the glass.*) Now, if your coat will only fit me———

Ton. Fit ! it must fit. My brother's habits were of an easy nature—they would fit any one. [*Helping it on.*]

Har. Now wouldn't you swear it had been built for me ?

Ton. The fact is, you are a capital block

Har. And how do I go under it? [*Walking about.*] Have I got rid of my vulgar sea roll?

Ton. Pretty well—pretty well. The whole secret of fashionable deportment, my dear fellow, is this—to be perfectly easy you must be tolerably stiff; you must combine an air of high life, in the carriage of your head, with the graceful flexibility in your lower limbs of the man of travel, as thus——[*Walks about*—Harry *imitates him.*]

Har. I see—just as though your maintop had been carried away by a squall, and you had had the spar fidded.

Ton. (*Pausing a moment.*) Yase——

Har. Now, how do I make a bow? Do you call that Parisian?

Ton. Less stoop—less stoop, and a more negligent bend—[*Bows.*]—there, as if your whole frame was going gracefully to pieces.

Har. Like a wreck in smooth water. And at table I suppose I shall be able to take wine pretty well.

Ton. Oh, yes—when you've been at some tables, you'll *whine* remarkably well. Now really I must congratulate you on the change. I shall have great pleasure, when you come to town, in driving you round to my acquaintance.

Har. Well now, do you know that's the very thing I want. I want to go to the Opera with you like other people of fashion, and hear the singers.

Ton. Hear the singers! My dear fellow, you are very innocent. The Opera is a place where people of fashion go to *see* the singers, and hear themselves.

Har. Well, you'll promise me one thing—you'll get me into a club in London, where I can dine when I like with a set of jolly fellows.

Ton. Jolly fellows! My dear friend, there are no jolly fellows at clubs. Clubs are places where men go on rainy days to stand in the windows and count the hackney-coaches. But rely on my friendship. When I see your aunt I shall have great pleasure in telling her that your improvement is altogether—decidedly—[*Yawns.*]—tiresome. [*Exit* L. H.

Har. I'm terribly afraid I shan't be able to go gracefully to pieces! [*Tries to bow.*] More likely to go down head foremost, like an overloaded Indiaman. I wonder how I look when I'm going through my evolutions. [*Draws forward a swing glass, and practises in it.* Lady Starchington *enters unperceived, and stands rooted with admiration.*] Lady Jane, I have the honour to be your most devoted. [*Bows.*] Sir Charles,

may I have the pleasure of taking wine with you? [*Bows.*]

Lady S. (*With a burst of transport.*) Henry!

Har. (*Looking at her through glass.*) Aunt!

Lady S. Now I recognize my nephew. Ah! these clothes make a world of difference.

Har. The clothes, aunt? I thought the difference consisted in the *style*.

Lady S. And that is inherent in your mother's blood. You have now, Henry, had an opportunity of forming an opinion of Mr. Tonnish—isn't it your impression that his manners and sentiments are equally perfect?

Har. (*A la* Tonnish.) Why—really, aan't—ah—yase.

Lady S. Could I have done better than in proposing such a man for the husband of your sister?

Har. Why, really, aunt—ah—no.

Lady S. Yet what is her return? She has fixed her affections on a low, mean, wretched fellow, that I can't find terms to describe to you.

Har. Impossible!

Lady S. It's a fact—a man that would disgrace the family This person has had the impudence to propose an elopement to her! Now you must see that unless some decisive step be taken——

Har. I'll shoot the fellow!

Lady S. My heroic Henry! I have but one more wish to make me completely happy—you will dispense with the services of that marine animal down stairs———

Har. Poor Tom!

Lady S. Henry, don't descend to the vulgarity of "poor Tom"-ing him. I must insist upon his going—but here comes Emily. Now, Henry, you will remember your sphere in life. An English gentleman, like an English officer, will always be faithful to his station. [*Exit* L. H.

EMILY *enters with the utmost warmth*, R. H

Emi. Dear—dear Henry!

Har. (*Extending his hand.*) Emmy———

Emi. (*In surprise.*) My brother!

Har. (*Surveying her through his glass.*) Bless me! how you're altered.

Emi. And are not you?

Har. What is this, I hear Emmy—aunt tells me you have been a very naughty girl.

Emi. And do you believe it.

Har. You are thinking of disgracing the family.

Emi. Henry—if you have ceased to love your sister, surely respect for her should teach you——

Har. Yes, yes, Emmy, but this is not a trifling matter, you should remember your station—you see how *I* am changed?

Emi. You are indeed, when you can become a partner in a conspiracy against your sister's peace. Since this is the only reception you can give me Henry—you will excuse me if I return to my chamber, and there in solitude remember that I had once—a brother. [*Goes off in tears* R. H.]

Har. (*Running after her.*) But Emmy, my dear—Emmy,—she's gone; this lecturing is not so easy as I thought.

Enter TOM CRINGLE *with the letter* L. H.

Tom. I begs pardon master Harry, here's a letter from a gentleman who has been telegraphing Miss Emily—somebody my lady has clapp'd under the "non interccurse Act."

Har. Oh the very pirate I wanted to overhaul,—[*Opens the letter and reads.*] Sir the emergency of the case must plead my excuse in thus abruptly addressing you; I have long lov'd Miss Halcyon with feelings that have been fully reciprocated. (Here's impudence, Tom fetch my pistols.) "She has always spoken of you in terms of such affection, that I can't believe you are a party with her aunt to the ruin of her happiness," (Better and better, Tom get me a horsewhip,) "but will consent to afford me a few words on the beach, when I will give you any explanation you require. Edward Morton Lieutenant, H. M. S. Orion."

Tom. Morton—why he was with your father in the Ariadne.

Har. Is it possible—and have I been so eager to injure an honourable and worthy man, whom my country and my service teach me equally to serve—Tom run to the beach and say I'll follow instantly,—stop here comes my aunt—now I see an engagement a head—you must lie to, Tom, and when you find she gets the weather guage of me, bear down to my support.

Tom. Aye, aye, Master Harry, the right colours are flying at the foretop after all. [*Opens a window which leads to a balcony, and gets over the rails.*]

Enter LADY STARCHINGTON, L. H.

Lady S. Well, Henry, what are your impressions now?

Har. That I cut a very ridiculous figure aunt, in trying to play a fine weather exquisite; so as I am ashamed of the service perhaps you'll permit me to dispense with the uniform? [*Pulling off his coat.*]

Lady S. Henry!

Har. And this horrible french flag. [*Throwing down the* There—I've struck!

Lady S. The boys mad!

Har. Then it's with delight at getting back to my old coat and feelings. [*Putting on his middys coat.*]

Lady S, Have you dared to jest with me, sir?

Har. No aunt, it's you that have jested; didn't you say that Emily was in love with some wretched low person,

Lady S. Certainly.

Har. A Lieutenant in the navy?

Lady S. What of that?

Har. What of that? give me leave to tell you aunt, that I consider a man who risks his life in the service of his country, worthy of the best reward his country can offer him!

Lady S. Here's a tirade.

Har. And also let me say, it's my opinion that if you abuse the Lieutenant, you'll go next to the midshipmen.

Lady S. You are impertinent, sir.

Har. If you tell me of *station* aunt, I shall talk to you of *order.*

Lady S Do you dare presume?

Har. Now, my dear aunt, if you begin to scold. I shall begin to sing—I always sing in a hurricane.

Lady S. You impudent young Jack-a-napes—you smooth faced dissembler.

Har. No, no, aunt, merely [*Sings.*] "A little sailor boy capering ashore."

Lady S. Will you hear me—you shall hear me!

Har. Certainly aunt, [*Sings.*] "Blow high—blow low."

Lady S Hear your aunts last words, sir!

Har. (*Sings.*) "Tom Starboards last whistle."

Lady S. Baffled—laugh'd at. But I will be heard—I command submission, Henry! [Tom Cringle *at this moment puts his head over the balcony with a speaking trumpet, which he claps to his mouth*]

Tom. Seventy four—ahoy!

Lady S. (*Falling in a chair,*) Yah! murder! thieves! [Harry *runs off*—Cringle *disappears*—Tonnish *and* Anne *run in* —*Scene closes*]

SCENE III.—*A Landscape.*

Enter MORTON, R. H.

Mort. What an hour of gnawing suspense have I passed; no answer yet to my letter from young Halcyon. I have every cause to fear his aunt's influence, but I will not despair lowering as the sky may seem, there is still a light that struggles through it, and that light is Emily.

SONG.—MORTON. [*Introduced.*]

[*At its conclusion he turns to the* L. H. *looking off, and* Limberback, Stubbins, *and* Man, *enter* R. H. *at back unperceived.*]

Lim. That's the prisoner—now Stubbins do your duty, if he resists knock him down—and if he complains, tell him, that to do a great right it is sometimes necessary to do a little wrong. [*He retires* R. H. *they advance*]

Stub. Zarvant, sir, your neam I think be Muster Morton.

Mort. It is.

Stub. Well, zur, as I be rather short sighted, perhaps you'll be so good as to read this noat, whilst I in a friendly respectful sort of way, lay my hands upon your shoulder. [*Seizing him.*]

Mort. You rascal, what do you mean by this impertinence?

Stub. Bless you, sir, all the pertinence be in the paper.

Mort. A writ—at whose suit is this?

Stub. Young Master Henry's.

Mort. Impossible!

Stub. But it be, wer'n't he his old father's *ex*ecutor?

Mort. Here must be some mistake—let go your hand.

Stub. Let go, when my duty be to seize thy Habus Corpus? why that would be a 'poundin a felony.

Mort. Is there no help? [Harry *sings outside* "On board the Arethusa." Harry *runs in* L. H.]

Har. Lieutenant Morton, our acquaintance commences in a way that's rather odd.

Mort. Yes, sir, and as disgraceful as it's odd.

Har. Disgraceful!

Mort. It is not the usual character of an English sailor, to descend to the shore going subtleties of an ink-fingered lawyer.

Har. Pray, sir, are you addressing these remarks to me?

Mort. To whom, but the person who could take advantage of an appeal to his honour and humanity, to increase a sufferer's misfortunes?

Har. My good sir, your love for my sister has unsettled your reason.

Mort. (*Shewing the writ.*) This instrument is in your name, and for a debt which I give you my honour I believed had long ago been discharged.

Har. (*Looking at the writ.*) Well—how very odd—let me recollect—my good man did I give you this paper?

Stub. Noa, zur—Muster Limberback.

Har. Limberback—oh, the old shark! now the channel's clear.

Enter LIMBERBACK, R. H.

Lim. Dear Mr. Henry.

Har. *Dear* Mr. Henry—by what authority, sir, did you procure this legal harpoon?

Lim (*Giving another paper*) You will perceive, sir, by this paper, that it is but an ordinary civil proceeding.

Har. Oh, then you call sending a gentleman to gaol, a *civil* proceeding? [*Reads*] What's this? thirty pounds advanced by my father to release one of his officers from prison; this must have been a gift.

Lim. Pardon me, sir, by this evidence simply a loan.

Har. Then thus I tear up a document which impugns my fathers character.

Mort. How!

Har. (*Tearing up the writ*) And in this very *rude* manner, I put an end to a *civil* proceeding.

Mort. I'm paralyzed! [*Enter* TOM CRINGLE, L. H.]

Tom. What's the matter your honour, have you had an engagement?

Har. Yes, Tom, and here's a craft [*Pointing to* Lim.] you shall tow into port. [*Throws him round* L. H.]

Tom. Shan't I capture the whole fleet, sir? [*Seizing* Lim. *with one hand, and grasping the* Constables *Coat with the other.*] Now you Picaroons heave ahead, I'll stick to you like parsewerance to a fine commander. [*Goes off with them* R H.]

Mort. Mr. Halcyon what am I to think of this?

Har. Merely, sir, that you've done me great injustice.

Mort. Of that I am conscious.

Har. You must give me satisfaction, sir

Mort. Sir!

Har. I say you must give me satisfaction.

Mort. In what way?

Har. You must dry up my sisters tears before to m rrow—You must drive off your rival. Now the way to drive him off is to call him out—do you fight him, and I'll second you—an affair of honour is just the thing I want.

Mort. You cannot doubt my readiness to win a prize like Emily.

Har. Well, then my advice is Mr. Morton, that you go and write the challenge—I'll take care it shall be delivered, and if you will bear down in about half an hour, you shall hear all about it.

Mort. A thousand thanks my generous friend—Emilys presence is a pledge for my activity. [*Exit* L. H.

Har. Tom Cringle, ahoy!

Tom. (*Outside* R. H.) Aye, aye. [*Runs in* R. H.)

Har. Well Tom, have you sent ahead those pirates?

Tom. Yes, Master Harry, at fifteen knots an hour.

Har. Now do you know Tom, it strikes me there is a plot going on at home, against my sisters peace, and as you and I have often had a masquerade ashore, I want you to get me a disguise. I want to go as a little beggar boy, and you as my poor blind mother.

Tom Well there's no difficulty in that—why bless *your* heart master Harry, I've stood god mother to half the swabs in Plymouth. [*Exit* R. H.

SONG—HARRY, [*Introduced.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber.*

Enter LADY STARCHINGTON, 1 E. R. H. *Her Handkerchief to her eyes followed by* TONNISH.

Lady S. Mr. Tonnish, don't attempt to console me, the perverse capricious little villain!

Ton. (*Yawning.*) But Lady S, I have made a discovery I was not all prepared for. I have yet a rival.

Lady S. Don't let that alarm you, this morning my lawyer had his instructions to remove him, and I expect him every instant to announce——

Enter LIMBERBACK, L. H.

well, sir, have you done it?

Lim. Yes, my lady, but I regret to say, that Mr. Harry happening to come up at the same moment, he tore up both the writ and the note, and set the prisoner free.

Lady S. What, sir?

Lim. And consigning me to the care of his Bo'son, I was in great danger of entering a duck pond, because the latter contended that to do a great right—

Lady S. I shall go mad with vexation. [*Walks about*]

Lim. It is sometimes necessary——

Lady S. I shall go mad, sir. [*Turning indignantly to him.*] I see the secret of all this—this boy is the tool of his sister. Henry has his weak points and she knows them.

Lim. And don't you know them, my lady?

Lady S. None, but his absurd devotion to his fathers memory.

Lim. Why, my lady, this secret is inestimable—the father must assist you in your views upon the son.

Lady S My good friend, his father happens to be dead.

Lim. The admiral could have writ on a letter during his last

moments, tenderly enjoining Henry and Emily, to submit to their dear aunts judgement in all matters that concern her happiness.

Lady S. But how could such a letter be procured?

Lim. Long conversance with my rever'd friends hand, would enable me to immitate it.

Lady S. Well.

Lim. And acknowledging the rule that to do a great right—

Lady S Yes. yes.

Lim. Unless some accompaniment were necessary to stamp its authenticity.

Lady S. Some gift——

Ton. A picture.

Lady S. I have no picture!

Lim. A lock of hair——

Lady S. I have no hair!

Ton. How tiarsome!

Lim. Yet, both these things could be provided.

Lady S. True, now I think of it—Anne has a lock of hair belonging to her father, precisely the same color as the Admirals—I found it placed for safety in one of my drawers—she shall give it me.

Lim. That lock my lady—

Lady S. Enclosed in your letter?

Ton. Yase.

Lady S Stop, stop, we've overlooked the principal difficulty who's to deliver it —

Lim. The post——

Ton. From Naples, that will appear *far fetch'd*

Lady S. Now then we are at a stand still.

Ton. No: so, I expect my brothers groom by the Brighton Coach—I'll turn him into the Admirals courier.

Lady S. Dear Mr. Tonnish, now our scheme's complete.

Anne *runs in* L. H.

Anne. Oh my lady—here's a poor little beggar boy and an old blind woman who says she has got a sad case to lay before your ladyship.

Lady S. Am I the overseer of the parish?

Anne But my lady she says she has come by master Henrys authority.

Lady S. There, this house will be made a refuge for the destitute—your young master is too good natur'd—Anne shut the gate against them.

Anne. But they are here my lady. [*Exit Anne.*

Enter HARRY L. H. *dressed in a Tarpaulin Hat—canvas Trowsers and ragged Jacket, and Tom as an old woman, leaning on a crutch, and carrying a basket.—*

Har. Come along mother—here's my lady—good morning my lady, this is my mother Mrs. Mills so please you, and my name's Joseph Mills, or as they call me about here fatherless Joe.

Lady S. And what's your business with me fatherlesss *Joe.*

Har. Why I'll tell you my lady as soon as we have rested. [Lady S. *rises.* Harry *takes her chair.*] thank you my lady—here mother take a seat [*Gives* Tom *the chair.*]

Lady S. Upon my word!—

Har. You must know my lady, my mother Mrs. Mills is a perfect lady, as you may see—and when she was young and pretty she was a particular friend of the old Admirals.

Lady S. What sir?

Har Quite true my lady, there was something in her manners so wery captivating, and so he said to her when she got married, Mrs Mills says he, if ever you should come to want, you go to Fair Weather Villa and there will be a home for you.

Lady S. Indeed!

Har So as things have gone badly with us this last month my lady, I advised mother to do as the old Admiral told her—and as we were coming here my lady ——

Lady S. You met an impertinent little Jackanapes who authorised your freedom—return to your friend sir, and say I beg to tell him——

Lim. (*Touching her arm.*) My lady.

Lady S. Did you ever hear of such an insult?

Lim. I never knew of one that could be better turned to more advantage.

Lady S. Advantage?

Lim. This person will be an important witness to our letter.

Lady S. Ah!

Lim. A few smooth words, and a glass or two of cordial, would mould her to your purpose—in the mean time the letter can be prepared the hair obtained and every preparation made against your nephews return.

Lady S. I see I see—thanks for the suggestion; away then to your task Mr. Limberback, and you Mr. Tonnish send for your courier.

Lim. With all dispatch my lady, since we both agree in the principle, that to do a great right is———

Ton. Dem'd tiarsome. [*Exit with* Limberback R. H.

Lady S. Joseph Mills my affection for my brother is a sufficient inducement to treat you and your mother with every kindness—Anne—[Anne *Enters* R. H.] take Joseph Mills into the kitchen and give him something to eat—and do you hear [*Aside to her.*] bring my ratafia and a glass.

Ann. The particular bottle, madam ?

Har. Thank you my lady—then I'll leave mother with you, you'll find she's quite a lady tho' she's full of firmity—now Tom mind your soundings. [*Aside to him—bowing round to* Lady S.—*smothering a laugh as he goes to with* Anne R. H.]—And as for you, my lass, you shall find I am quite a gentleman, without a bit of 'firmity. [*Kisses her and goes out with her.*]

Lady S. Mrs. Mills I understand you have the misfortune to be blind.

Tom. Yes my lady.

Lady S. But you are not deaf ?

Tom. No my lady—and I aint dumb,

Lady S. (*Aside.*) I'll answer for it when your lips are moistened, [Anne *re-enters* R. *with a bottle and glass.*] Now Mrs. Mills you have walked some way, you are infirm, a glass of superior ratafia will do you no harm. [*Fills a glass and gives it*—Tom *drinks it, smacks his lips and holds the glass for another.*] Another ! I knew you would like it, it's been a medicine in our family many years. [Tom *empties the glass and presents it again.*] a third !]*Aside.*] I'm afraid drinking is one of her infirmities.

Tom. That will do my lady.

Lady S. (*Gives it* Anne *who Exits* R. H.] I should hope so, now Mrs. Mills, be kind enough to listen to me—I hear that in your youth, you knew and respected my dear brother the Admiral.

Tom. That I did my lady.

Lady S. Then you must desire the welfare of his son.

Tom. That I does my lady

Lady S. Would you be willing to aid me in any plan I could point out to secure that sons welfare ?

Tom. Would I—shiver and sink me !

Lady S. Mrs. Mills !

Tom. Avast Tom, [*Aside.*] I beg pardon, ma'am, anything you like,

Lady S. Briefly then—I must tell you, that Henry is at this moment the disturber of my peace.

Tom. What my lady ?

Lady S. I grieve to say it, but a more head strong—wilful—undutiful boy never abused his friends affection.

Tom. (*Pulling off his bonnet,*] It's a lie my lady!

Lady S. (*Starting up*) The Boson!

Tom. Scuttle me. [*Runs off* L. H.]

Tady S. Thieves—murder—fury! [*Exit* L. H.

SCENE V.—*Ground Parlour of the Villa, opening to the Lawn, with view of the Sea.*

Enter TOM CRINGLE, L. H.

Tom. My eyes! what a lucky thing I cut and run! In two minutes the old seventy-four would have riddled me. Well, all this land larking may be very well for Master Henry, but it doesn't agree with an old Jack who got smoked at *Traflygar.* I've a good mind to ship a snooze—there's a chair there as good as a hammock. I'll bring myself to an anchor, and if Master Harry wants me he may hail me. [*Draws an arm chair and sinks into it.*] Now, easy—easy, there—she grounds—ease off the backstay—[*Drops back.*]—aye, aye—now she heels—square away by the lifts and braces—aye, aye—now stand by to let go your anchors—aye, aye—[*Shoves out his legs, and drops back his head, asleep.*]

Enter ANNE, L. H.

Anne. Deary me! what can my lady want with poor father's lock of grey hair. I don't want to part with it—I keep it for luck.

Tom. (*Asleep.*) Aye, aye———

Anne. Who's that? Mr. Cringle, I declare! goodness me, how sound he sleeps—and how—[*Stretching over his head.*]—how very *grey* his hair is—just the colour of poor father's. I wonder if he's particularly attached to all of it. There's a little tuft on the top—I don't think he'd miss it; but stealing is a great sin, and I know I couldn't cut it off if I was to try. [*Holds up the lock, and feels with the other hand for her scissors.*] My hand trembles so! But then again I'm told to honour my father! I'm sure I can't do it—I shall cut his scull. [*Placing the scissors to his hair.*]

Tom. Aye, aye———

Anne. Deary me!..[*Dropping it.*]—is anybody coming?—no—[*She cuts off the lock and brings it forward.*]—I've got it—how my heart beats! Deary me, he's waking! I shall be found out—I know I shall! [*Exit cautiously,* L. E. L. H.

Tom. (*Waking up with a loud sneeze.*) Chish! scuttle the shore, a man can't snooze for five minutes without taking cold—[*Sneezes.*]—aboard ship. I never sneezed above twice in

my life, and that was with gunpowder. [*Sneezes.*] Deep seas sink the land, I say—what's the use of—[*Sneezes.*]—it! [*Goes out* U. E. R. C.—Tonnish *enters* R. H.]

Ton. So, the grand result of Lady Starchington's scheme to establish my fortune is to put a bullet in my skull! I must go to town. [LADY STARCHINGTON *enters* L. H.]

Lady S. Dear Mr. Tonnish congratulate me. Here is the letter and the lock of hair, which I have just obtained from Anne—could anything be more demonstrative?

Ton. Yes, Lady S.—a challenge from my rival. Not that I object to fight him—but if I should get shot, it would be so infernally tiresome.

Lady S. He will best be answered by an application to a magistrate. Let us lose no time in trying our experiment with Henry—ah! here he comes! [HARRY *runs in from the back*—LIMBERBACK *enters from side.*]

Har. Well, aunt, I suppose you mean to scold me?

Lady S. No, Henry, I have nothing more to say to you, than that whilst you have been amusing yourself with offering an insult to your aunt, a courier has arrived from Rome with a letter from your father.

Har. A letter from my father?

Lady S. Written during his last illness. I have not opened it—I had not the courage, for when I saw that superscription—the last words, most likely, ever written by his venerable fingers——[*Turns away, and takes out her handkerchief.*]

Ton. (*Takes out his.*) How very affecting!

Lim. (*Taking out his.*) To do a great right———

Har. (*Reads.*) "My dear Harry and Emmy. I cannot close my eyes without sending you my blessing, and begging, as you are both young and inexperienced, to be obedient to your kind aunt in all things I make it a particular injunction that you, Emmy, will never marry any man that your aunt does not approve of. I enclose you a lock of my hair. Be a credit to your country, Harry. [*Dropping his voice and muttering.*] God bless you! JOHN HALCYON." [*Taking out the lock.*] And this is a lock of his venerable hair!

Lady S. (*With a burst of grief.*) His venerable hair!

Ton. and Lim. His venerable hair!

Har. Then its all over with poor Emmy. Father's commands must be obeyed. I suppose my sister knows of this?

Lady S. Not yet—but she's here! [EMILY *enters* R. H.]

Har. Emmy, here's a letter you must read. [*Gives it.*] It is from father; and when you have finished it, I have something to shew you.—[*Enter* TOM CRINGLE, *at the back.*]—

Tom, here's a letter come from father—written just before his death; and here's a lock of his hair, It must be a pleasure to see a relic of your old commander—look at it!

Tom. (*Staring.*) The admiral's! [*Reels his head.*] Who says so?

Lady S. The courier is in the hall that brought it.

Tom. If that ain't my top gallant lock, shiver and sink me!

Har. What?

Tom. Some Picaroon has been shaving m

Har. Your's, Tom!

Anne. (*Who has stolen on at the side—falling on her knees beside him.*) Oh, Mr. Henry! please to forgive me, and I'll tell you every thing.

Lady S. Anne!

Har. Speak—speak!

Anne. That hair *is* Mr. Cringle's, and my wicked fingers cut it off.

Lady S. (*Sinking into a chair with a scream.*) Yah!

Har. and Emi. Ha, ha, ha!

Tom. Oh, you young pirate! I knew I couldn't have sneezed half an hour for nothing.

Lim. To do a great right I must preserve my person from annoyance. *Runs out* L. H.

Ton. Mr. Halcyon, I am very sorry I should appear to be mixed up in this affair, but I beg to assure you that, much as I desire the honour of your sister's hand, I consider this attempt altogether—[*Yawns.*]—decidedly—tiresome. [*Exit* R. H.

Har. Lieutenant Morton, ahoy! [*Enter* MORTON, *at back*] Mr. Morton, I am most happy to inform you that my aunt has at length done justice to your character, though she is too much affected at this moment to tell you so.

Mer. Lady Starchington is this possible?

Har. She bids me say she now consents most heartily to your union with my sister,

Lady S. What, sir? [*Starting up—he waves the lock of hair.*]

Har. Ha, ha—his venerable hair!

Lady S. You little monster! [*Sinking down again.*]

Mer. And now what can we say to one who has made two despairing beings so eminently happy.

Har. Simply this—that as the Middy is still upon the ship books, and may soon go to sea again, he trusts that the vagaries of the night may not prevent his promotion; but that those who stickle most for the decorum of the service will bestow a lenient look on his "caperings ashore."

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264 My Fellow Clerk
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271
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300
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302 Love's Labour's Lost
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305 Militry Execution
306 Therese
VOL. XX.
307 Good Night's Rest
308 Poor Gentleman
309

310 A Night in the Bastille
311 Crichton, or the Dragon Knight

312 Duenna
313 Devil's Daughters
314 Bandit of the Blind Mine
315 My Lord is not my Lord
316
317 A Close Siege
318 Miller of Mans-
319 [field
320 Double Gallant
321 Clandestine Marriage [Alive
322 Happiest Man
VOL. XXI.
323 Serpent of Nile
324 Pink of Politeness
325 Mast. Humphrey's Clock
326
327 Ruby Ring
328 Jane of the Hat-
329 Marceline [chet
330 Like Father, like Son
331 Guido Fawkes
332 Englishmen in India
333 Temple of Death
334 Helen Oakleigh
335 Railroad Station
336 Loss of the Royal George
337 Robespierre
338 White Milliner
VOL. XXII
339 Sergeant's Wedding [missed
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342 My Wife's Dentist
343 Rubber of Life
344 Teddy Roe
345 Barnaby Rudge
346 U Paddy Whack in Italia
347 Lady & Gentleman in a Perplexing Predicament
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349 Queen of Cyprus
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351 Bathing
352 Nick of the Woods
353 Norma
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VOL. XXIII.
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357
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360 Cousin Lambkin
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370 Asmodeus, the Little Devil
VOL. XXIV.
371 Aline
372 Double-bedded Room [Floor
373 My Wife's Second
374 Ambassador's Lady [fast
375 Wedding Break-
376 Linda
377 Siege of Rochelle
378 Moral Philosopher
379 Railroad Trip
380 My Wife's Come
381 Bohemians of Paris
382 Meg Murnock
383 Lesson for Gentlemen
384 Old Curiosity Shop
385 Christmas Carol
386 King Richard ye Third
VOL. XXV.
387 Roll of the Drum
388 Young Scamp
389 Mistaken Story
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391 Signal
392 Barark Johnson
393 Post of Honour
394 The Polka
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396 Georgy Barnwell
397 River God
398 Guardian Sylph
399

400 Martin Chuzzlewit
401 Milliner's Holiday
402 Judith of Geneva
VOL. XXVI.
403
404 Mysteries of Paris
405 Don Cesar de Bazan
406 Protector
407 Seated Sentence
408 Young England
409 Home Again

410 Review [ding
411 Corporal's Wed-
412 House Dog
413 La Dame de St. Tropez [pole
414 Margaret Catch-
415 Smoked Miser
416 Madelaine
417 Widow Bewitched
418 Midnight

VOL. XXVII.

419 Another Glass
420 Secret Foe
421 King and I
422 Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lecture (Lyceum)
423 Powder and Ball
424 Mrs. Caudle, or Curtain Lectures (Princess's)
425 Love in Livery
426 Faith, Hope, and
427 Lestelle [Charity
428 Wolsey
429 Lodgings for Single Gentlemen
430
431 Railway King
432 Popping in & Out
433 Who's the Composer?

VOL. XXVIII.

434 Cut for Partners
435 Minute Gun at Sea
436 Mendicant's Son
437 Cricket on Hearth
438 Phantom Break-
439 Norah Creina [fast
440
441 Sea King's Vow
442 Done Brown
443 On the Tiles
444 Last Kiss
445 Laid up in Port
446 [House
447 Birchington
448 Sister and I
449 Loan of a Wife

VOL. XXIX.

450 Above and Below
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452 Advice to Husbands
453 Barber and Brave
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455 Fellow Servants
456 Battle of Life
457 Hand of Cards
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461 Lilly Dawson
462 Little Nun [favour
463 Kissing goes by
464 Perourou, the Bellows Mender
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468 Buffalo Girls
469 Obi, or 3-fingered Jack
470 Anchor of Hope
471 Rival Sergeants
472 Rag Picker of Paris
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474
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520 Adam F[illegible]f
521
522 Not to be Done
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524 102, or the Veteran and his Progeny
525 Blood Red Knight
526 Sent to the Tower
527 Allow me to Apologize
528 Temptation
529 Teacher Taught

VOL. XXXIV.

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531 Hans Von Stein
532 Greek Slave
533 Bould Soger Boy
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535 Robert the Bruce
536 Ragged School
537 Last of the Fairies
538 Scarlet Mantle
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